

The Missouri State Capitol

On February 5, 1911, lightning struck the dome of the Missouri State Capitol, igniting a blaze which destroyed the building. As a result, the State Capitol Commission Board was established to coordinate and supervise the construction of a new capitol, the third capitol located in Jefferson City and the sixth in the state. An architectural competition was held to select plans for the building, and on October 6, 1912, the firm of Tracy & Swartwout of New York City was chosen. The new Capitol was constructed between 1913 and 1917 at a cost of roughly \$4.21 million.

The State Capitol overlooks the Missouri River and is of renaissance style architecture. It measures 437 feet long, 200 feet wide in the wings and 300 feet wide in the center, as well as 262 feet

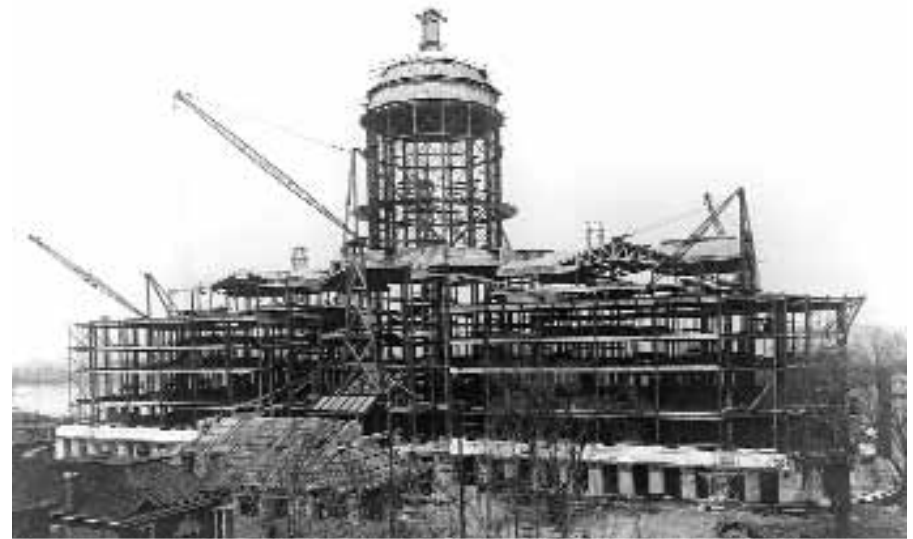
high from the basement floor to the apex of the dome. The rotunda measures 68 feet in diameter. Both the exterior and interior of the building, with the exception of the third floor, are made of Burlington limestone from Carthage, Missouri. The third floor contains stone from the Phenix Quarry in Greene County, Missouri. On the dome of the State Capitol is the figure of Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture.

At the south entrance to the building stand bronze doors measuring 13 by 18 feet which open onto the 30-foot wide grand stairway.



Capitol Commissioners at the Dome Capping, December 5, 1916.

Thomas Garfield Cooper Collection
Missouri State Archives



Capitol Construction, General View Looking North, April 15, 1915.

Thomas Cooper, State Capitol Commission Board
Missouri State Archives

Murals depicting various scenes and events of Missouri life decorate the walls and dome of the Capitol. Most impressive are the Thomas Hart Benton murals located in the House Lounge.

These and other decorations can be seen on tours of the Capitol, which are given daily with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day and Easter. Tour hours are Monday through Friday 8 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 4 p.m. Walk in tours are given on the hour with the last one at 4 p.m. Tour groups require prior reservations which can be made by calling (573) 751-4127.



Summers Collection, Missouri State Archives

On the evening of Sunday, February 5, 1911, lightning struck the dome of the Missouri State Capitol, igniting a fire that completely destroyed the building.

**From the Office of Secretary of State
Robin Carnahan**

